AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A guidewire exit tool, comprising:

a handle;

a pin secured to the handle and having a diameter that fits within a guidewire channel of a rapid exchange-type catheter; and

a web that secures the pin to the handle wherein the web fits through a slot of a guidewire channel to allow the pin to be moved along the guidewire channel by the handle, wherein the forward facing surface of the web is substantially blunt to prevent cutting the catheter, and wherein the pin engages a guidewire and lifts an end of the guidewire out of a guidewire channel.

2. (Original) The guidewire exit tool of Claim 1, wherein the pin has a tapered end that engages a guidewire.

3. (Previously presented) The guidewire exit tool of Claim 1, wherein the web has a thickness that is less than the diameter of the pin.

4. (Original) The guidewire exit tool of Claim 1, wherein the handle is oval in shape.

5. (Original) The guidewire exit tool of Claim 4, wherein the oval handle has an axis that is angled with respect to a longitudinal axis of the pin.

6. (Original) The guidewire exit tool of Claim 4, wherein the handle has a recessed center and a raised annular rim.

7. (Original) The guidewire tool of Claim 6, wherein the handle has opposing recesses on each side of the handle.

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8. (Currently amended) A method of using a guidewire with a rapid exchange-type catheter, comprising:

loading a guidewire into a guidewire channel of a rapid exchange-type catheter;

engaging a proximal end of the guidewire with a guidewire exit tool to lift a proximal end of the guidewire out of the guidewire channel, the guidewire exit tool including:

a handle;

a pin secured to the handle; [[and]]

a web that fits through a slot in a guidewire channel and secures the pin to the handle such that the pin is slidable along the guidewire channel by the handle, wherein the forward facing surface of the web is substantially blunt to prevent cutting the catheter; and

wherein the pin is insertable into the guidewire channel to engage the proximal end of a guidewire and lift the guidewire out of the guidewire channel.

9. (Original) The method of Claim 8, wherein the pin has a tapered end that engages the guidewire.

10. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 8, wherein the proximal end of the guidewire engages with the guidewire exit tool by sliding the guidewire exit tool in the guidewire channel.

11. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 8, wherein the proximal end of the guidewire engages with the guidewire exit tool by sliding the guidewire against the guidewire exit tool.

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12. (New) The guidewire exit tool of Claim 1, wherein the pin is round such that the forward portion of the pin has a solid, elliptical surface disposed at an angle that will engage the guidewire to lift it through the slot.

13. (New) The method of Claim 8, wherein the pin is round such that the forward portion of the pin has a solid, elliptical surface disposed at an angle that will engage the guidewire to lift it through the slot.

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